

## CONSOLIDATED LAND OFFICES.

[To accompany Bill H. R. No. 126.]

JUNE 4, 1860.

Mr. BARRETT, from the Committee on Public Lands, made the following

### REPORT.

The Committee on Public Lands, to whom was referred a "bill making further provision relative to consolidated land offices," have had the same under consideration, and have authorized the report of the accompanying substitute, and recommend its passage.

The necessity of this measure is clearly set out in the accompanying letters from the Commissioner of the General Land Office, which are adopted as a part of this report.

GENERAL LAND OFFICE,  
*February 29, 1860.*

SIR: In reply to your inquiry in letter of 23d instant I have the honor to state that, in the opinion of this office, some allowance should be made to registers and receivers of district land offices at those points where discontinued districts have been or may hereafter be consolidated.

Under the act of 12th of June, 1840, (Laws 5, p. 384,) it becomes the duty of the department to discontinue land districts wherein the lands undisposed of are reduced below 100,000 acres, and the same are attached to and made subject to entry at some one of the remaining districts in the same State. This discontinuance of land districts devolves upon the officers of the district to which the business is transferred a heavy increase of labor and responsibility without any corresponding increase of emolument; and, in the opinion of this office, the passage of a law such as that now pending, authorizing them to charge fees in certain cases, &c., would be but an act of simple justice to those officers.

As respects your proposition, that the law be made to read so as to allow such officers to charge fees in addition to the salary, &c., now allowed by law, not to exceed in any event the sum of \$3,000 per annum, I have to state that this can be done by modifying the proviso to the 1st section, as follows: "*Provided*, the whole amount of the

register's compensation, including all fees and commissions to which he is entitled, under existing laws, shall not exceed \$3,000 per annum, or *pro rata* per quarter; the excess, if any, over that amount, shall be paid into the treasury, and the receiver in like manner shall receive his equal share of such fees," &c.

This, it is believed, will meet your views, and secure the officers for consolidated districts a fair compensation for the increased duties required of them.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

JOS. S. WILSON,  
*Commissioner.*

Hon. J. B. CLARK,  
*House of Representatives.*

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GENERAL LAND OFFICE,  
March 8, 1860.

SIR: I have the honor to return herewith the draught of "a bill making further provision in relation to consolidated land offices," left here a few days since by the Hon. J. R. Barrett, of the Committee on Public Lands, and for the views of this office beg leave to refer to the enclosed copy of a letter addressed to the Hon. John B. Clark, of Missouri, on the subject. The modifications suggested by Mr. Clark in his letter to this office are noted in pencil on the bill, and are respectfully recommended for adoption by the committee as an amendment to the bill.

With these amendments, the bill is approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

JOS. S. WILSON,  
*Commissioner.*

Hon. E. THAYER,  
*Chairman of Committee on Public Lands,  
House of Representatives.*